

REMARKS

Claims 9-11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 25-27 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 9, 10 and 23 are amended.

Applicants thank Examiner Naff for the courtesies extended during the September 1, 2004 personal interview. During the interview, Applicants' undersigned representative traversed the rejections substantially in accordance with the arguments presented in the Amendment filed August 30, 2004. In addition, Applicants' undersigned representative particularly pointed out that the polymer described in Sumino contains both ethyleneoxy and the urethane bond structure, both of which are hydrophilic groups, such that one of these two groups is excluded from claims 10 and 23, which recite, respectively, that the prepolymer of claim 10 and the polymer of claim 23 contain a single type of hydrophilic group, as well as a single type of hydrophobic group. Thus, Sumino does not teach each and every feature of the processes of claims 10 and 23.

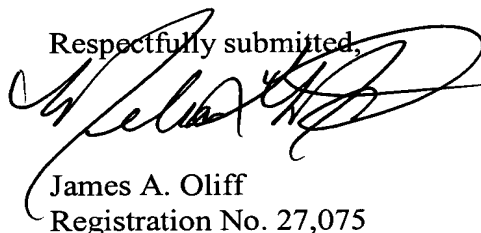
As discussed in the Amendment filed August 30, 2004, it is Applicants' position that the specification clearly describes the concepts of the hydrophilic group having affinity for the microorganisms and the hydrophobic group adsorbing the exogenous endocrine-disrupting chemical. However, in an effort to expedite allowance, claims 9, 10 and 23 are amended herein in order to delete these features.

As discussed in the interview, claim 9 was inadvertently amended to recite "the total weight of the hydrophobic prepolymer and the hydrophobic prepolymer," rather than "the total weight of the hydrophilic prepolymer and the hydrophobic prepolymer." Claim 9 is amended herein in order to correct this error.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of claims 9-11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 25-27 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: September 27, 2004

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